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# INTERNATIONAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE: PROGRESS REPORT AND PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR 1997-1999

SUMMARY

Annual progress reports to the Executive Board on the activities of the International Child Development Centre (ICDC) in Florence, Italy, were made from 1988 to 1990. In 1994, the first triennial report on the Centre covering the period 1991-1993, as well as proposed activities for 1994-1996, was submitted to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/1994/L.9).

Chapter I of the present report summarizes work carried out by the Centre during 1994-1996, the third three-year phase of its activities. It briefly notes activities in each of the three main ICDC programme areas: economic policies and mobilization of resources for children; the rights of the child; and decentralization, participation and local governance. It also refers to information, publications and documentation and describes training and capacity-building activities. The Centre's organization and management are also considered, including updates on staffing and financing.

Chapter II contains proposals for the next triennium (1997-1999). It discusses medium-term planning for the Centre as well as projected trends and activities in the major programme areas. The Centre's principal activities are expected to be concentrated in the following areas: (a) economic and social policies relating to children, including the pioneering work of the Centre on monitoring policies and the conditions of children in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States; and (b) the rights of the child, including a proposal to establish ICDC as a major knowledge base and training centre working for the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Although policy analysis and applied research will continue to represent the Centre's strongest comparative advantage within UNICEF, a relative shift of emphasis towards capacity-building and training, based especially on lesson-learning from practical field experience, is anticipated. A strengthened unit for information management and communications is also foreseen.

* E/ICEF/1996/18.

SUMMARY (continued)

The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board authorize a three-year extension for the Centre for the period 1997-1999. A total allocation of $10.5 million in supplementary funding is proposed, of which the Government of Italy has pledged 10.5 billion lire (approximately $6.7 million) for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from other sources for specific activities.

CONTENTS

| | | Paragraphs | Page |
|---|---|---|---|
| INTRODUCTION | | 1 - 2 | 3 |
| I. | PROGRESS REPORT, 1994-1996 | 3 - 15 | 3 |
| | A. Major programme areas | 3 - 9 | 3 |
| | B. Information and documentation activities | 10 - 11 | 5 |
| | C. Training and capacity-building | 12 | 5 |
| | D. Staffing and financing | 13 - 15 | 5 |
| II. | PROPOSED ACTIVITIES, 1997-1999 | 16 - 48 | 6 |
| | A. Medium-term planning for the Innocenti Centre: general trends | 16 - 22 | 6 |
| | B. Projected trends and activities in the major programme areas | 23 - 32 | 8 |
| | C. Information, documentation and publications | 33 - 39 | 11 |
| | D. Training and capacity-building | 40 - 42 | 12 |
| | E. Staffing and financing | 43 - 47 | 13 |
| | F. Recommendation | 48 | 14 |
| Annex. | ESTIMATED BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURES, 1997-1999 | | 15 |

## INTRODUCTION

1. The International Child Development Centre (ICDC), also known as the Innocenti Centre, was established in Florence, Italy, in September 1988. Its basic mandate, as approved by the UNICEF Executive Board and the Centre's International Advisory Committee, chaired by the Executive Director, is "to strengthen the capacity of UNICEF and its cooperating institutions to respond to the evolving needs of children and to promote an emerging new global ethic for children". To meet this challenge, the Centre provides opportunities for international professional exchanges of experiences and undertakes or promotes policy analysis, applied research and dissemination of the results of its activities. An increasingly important component of its work is to translate the results of research and policy analysis into relevant training and capacity-building programmes for UNICEF staff and its major partners.

2. The basic objectives, strategies and programme priorities, as well as the financial and administrative arrangements for the Centre, were presented in some detail to the 1988 Executive Board (see E/ICEF/1988/L.9 and Add. 1). Annual progress reports were submitted to the 1989, 1990 and 1991 Executive Board sessions (E/ICEF/1989/L.9, E/ICEF/1990/L.9 and E/ICEF/1991/L.9, respectively), together with a separate document (E/ICEF/1991/P/L.29) containing proposed activities for the 1991-1993 programme cycle. In 1994, the first triennial report on the Centre (E/ICEF/1994/L.9) was submitted to the Board, covering the years 1991-1993 and containing proposals for the period 1994-1996. Chapter I of the present document provides a brief summary of activities carried out during the third three-year phase of the Centre's activities (1994-1996), while chapter II outlines proposed activities for the next triennium (1997-1999).

## I. PROGRESS REPORT, 1994-1996

### A. Major programme areas

3. During the period 1994-1996, activities were concentrated in three major programme areas: (a) economic policies and the mobilization of resources for children; (b) the rights of the child; and c decentralization, participation and local governance.

#### Economic policies and the mobilization of resources for children

4. One of the Centre's main activities since its establishment in 1988, this programme aims at improving the situation of children and vulnerable groups through policy reform in the economic and social spheres. Research, advocacy and capacity-building activities have been carried out in four areas: human development and structural adjustment in sub-Saharan Africa; child poverty in industrialized countries; financing social services ("fiscal policy and the poor"); and public policies and social conditions in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic States: monitoring the transition to the market economy.

5. The monitoring project on Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States is an integral part of UNICEF policy analysis, technical assistance and advocacy activities in that region. Its main goal is to facilitate policy reform by improving international and national accessibility to data already collected by local statistical agencies, but which is generally underutilized, unanalysed and unpublished. A related goal is to build institutional capacity for policy analysis and applied social research in the region. The project originally involved nine countries, but was expanded to 18 in 1995 in order to

cover all former Soviet Union States, and further geographic expansion is foreseen, facilitated partly by support from the World Bank. Four Regional Monitoring Reports from this effort have attracted widespread interest. By launching this project in 1992, ICDC has established itself as a leading knowledge base on the subject.

Rights of the child

6. The Centre's programme on children's rights has undertaken research on the general principles contained in the "umbrella provisions" of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly Article 2 (non-discrimination), Article 3 (the "best interests of the child") and Article 4 (mobilization of "available resources"). It has also explored a number of thematic areas, such as issues relating to child labour (Article 32) and the psycho-social effects of war on children and their social reintegration (Articles 38 and 39). More broadly, the Centre is analysing and promoting mechanisms for monitoring the protection of children's rights and for improving child rights databases. It has also worked in support of the newly formed international Children's Rights Information Network (CRIN).

7. The Centre's newest project in children's rights concerns the protection, rehabilitation and social reintegration of child victims of armed conflicts and other forms of violence. Support is provided for research, policy analysis and programme strategy formulation, with some training support relating especially to psycho-social rehabilitation and expanded educational opportunities for children affected by war, violence and displacement. The initial research deals with two post-conflict situations, in Ethiopia and Eritrea, in collaboration with the UNICEF offices in those countries, and with supplementary support provided by the Government of Italy. This highly action-oriented study seeks practical ideas and modalities for the reintegration of children into schools and communities following years of fighting, dislocation and destruction. Ways to avoid both the institutionalization of children and an excessively clinical approach to the challenge of dealing with psycho-social trauma are being explored.

Decentralization, participation and local governance

8. In line with the World Summit for Children's call to States to encourage and assist subnational levels of Government to prepare their own initiatives, many countries are working towards decentralizing their national programmes of action (NPAs). Decentralization of the NPA essentially involves the formulation, financing and implementation of programmes at the many different levels to which responsibilities can be devolved. This programme on decentralization has carried out country case studies on the alternative strategies, instruments and actions that are, or may be, employed to decentralize NPAs in developing countries and optimize possibilities for reaching the World Summit goals for the 1990s.

Other programmes

9. While the major part of the Centre's activities have been included in the three main programme areas, some flexibility is maintained to enable the development of new ideas and areas of interest related to the overall concerns of UNICEF. The work done to explore the international debate concerning both the theory and practice of development work for children is one example of that. The results will be published under the title Children: Noble Causes or Worthy Citizens?. In March 1995, the Centre co-sponsored a seminar on demography and poverty which brought together leading international economists and

demographers, UNICEF regional economic advisers and other experts. During the seminar, the world-renowned economist Amartya Sen delivered the First Innocenti Lecture on the subject of "Mortality Changes as an Indicator of Economic Success and Failure", which was subsequently published in the new Innocenti Lecture series and widely distributed. As in earlier years, ICDC also undertook a number of cooperative initiatives with its host institution in Florence, the Istituto degli Innocenti. Two projects were completed on a joint initiative on "Historical Perspectives on Childhood". The first concerns historical aspects of infant mortality reduction in Europe, and a major study on this topic will be published late in 1996. The second study examines historical experiences with reducing child labour in Belgium, the United Kingdom, Spain, Japan and Colombia.

### B. Information and documentation activities

10. The Centre has maintained an active publications programme during this reporting period. It produced three commercially published books and 55 other publications during 1994-1996, bringing its total publication output since 1989, including foreign-language versions, to 162. The three books were: From Adjustment to Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Conflict, Controversy, Convergence, Consensus?; The Best Interests of the Child: Reconciling Culture and Human Rights; and Implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child: Resource Mobilization in Low-Income Countries. The Centre introduced a new series of Essential Readings in children's rights aimed at providing a resource that is a "library between two covers" and which brings together readings from essential reference works in a given area. The first in the series, on child labour and basic education, met with great demand. ICDC also made its debut into electronic publishing during this period. In cooperation with UNICEF Geneva, the Centre began work on preparing a full-text database of its children's rights materials.

11. The ICDC library has continued to upgrade both its database and reference services in order to provide effective support for the Centre's research, training and dissemination activities. The number of titles in its own database has risen from 1,100 in 1991 to 5,300 in June 1996. More importantly, however, in today's world of computerized libraries, ICDC can access over 300 million publications and other records in many of the world's principal collections.

### C. Training and capacity-building

12. The experience of the Centre in training and capacity-building comes from three main sources: (a) its cooperation with researchers based at universities and other centres, mainly in developing countries but also in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States, who have benefited from the support and outside contacts entailed in working with the Centre; (b) the participation of its staff in training events and courses organized by others, inside and outside UNICEF; and © its Innocenti Global Seminars and other workshops, with explicit training and professional exchange objectives. Two Innocenti Global Seminars were held in the period under review: one on "Monitoring the Rights of Children"; and the other, held at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica, on "Achieving Gender Equality in Families: The Role of Males".

### D. Staffing and financing

13. Early in 1994 a restructuring of the Centre's international staffing was approved to reduce programme support costs. Two international posts (deputy director and administration and finance officer) were eliminated and replaced by one senior operations officer post. The incumbent in that post was also

assigned responsibility for various aspects of the Centre's external relations, as well as for the initial development of the activities in the area of children and armed conflict. As a result of these and other changes, the Centre's basic international staff at the end of the current reporting period is as follows: a director, who also coordinates the Centre's work in children's rights; a senior operations officer; a senior fellow in child rights; a senior officer coordinating economic and social policies activities, including on Central and Eastern Europe,CIS and the Baltic States; an officer assigned specifically to the monitoring project on Central and Eastern Europe,CIS and the Baltic States; and an information officer. One authorized international post has been left unfilled deliberately, pending the outcome of efforts to increase the funding to the Centre that would enable it to increase annual expenditures to a level of at least $3 million. Thus, the regular international staff of the Centre numbers seven authorized posts, one of which is vacant. In addition, there are nine locally recruited staff members.

14. Since the founding of ICDC in 1988, the Government of Italy has financed its basic operation in accordance with the 1986 agreement and with the decision of the Executive Board that the "maintenance and basic staff of the Centre" be fully funded from supplementary funds. The 1986 agreement specifies that the Government of Italy shall provide an annual contribution of 3.5 billion lire. The agreement is renewed each three years, and the Government has met its commitment throughout the 1988-1996 period of the Centre's operation. With the relatively strong lira exchange rate prevailing during the first two trienniums, 1988-1993, the Centre's expenditure rate was approximately $3.1 million per year.

15. The decline in the dollar value of the lira in 1993 required significant adjustments in the Centre's programme, including the restructuring mentioned above and a reduction of the number of main programme areas from the initial four to three during the past triennium. Fortunately, the decline in the lira/dollar exchange rate has been partially offset by increased contributions to the Centre from other sources. During the 1994-1996 triennium, the average annual expenditure rate was $2.6 million. Of the total expenditures during this period of $7.8 million, $6.0 million was from the Italian core contribution (77 per cent) and $1.8 million from other sources. The most important new sources of support during the 1994-1996 triennium have been from the Government of Sweden for a three-year programme of support for the Centre's activities in children's rights; the World Bank for the monitoring project on Central and Eastern Europe,CIS and the Baltic States; the Government of Italy for a special study on the impact on children of the prolonged war in Eritrea and Ethiopia; and the Italian National Committee for UNICEF for a study on children and war in Rwanda.

## II. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES, 1997-1999

### A. Medium-term planning for the Innocenti Centre: general trends

16. The Centre's Advisory Committee and management have reviewed the issue of criteria for the selection of the Centre's main research and other activities. Those criteria, in recent years, have been described as follows: (a) work on the "frontiers" of UNICEF activities that may not now be a high priority but are likely to be in the medium-term; (b) initiatives requiring academic freedom, such as controversial topics concerning children's rights; • work involving research or reflection in a sabbatical-type setting for otherwise busy professionals; and (d) inputs on currently high priority areas for UNICEF. Prior reviews concluded that the first three of those criteria are especially

well-suited for ICDC since they are not easily carried out by other UNICEF offices. The fourth criterion, however, is also viewed as important in order to keep the work of the Centre linked to evolving UNICEF programme priorities, as well as matters of concern to country offices.

17. In using those criteria to identify possible new areas of study, at the March 1995 meeting of the Centre's Advisory Committee, it was agreed that stricter standards would be applied to determine when new research is needed on problems of concern to UNICEF. As noted by the representative of the Government of Italy at that meeting, the Centre's research should form the basis for a "blueprint for action". Whereas the idea of the Centre's being charged largely with responsibilities for "operations research" has not been widely accepted, nevertheless the Centre's choice of research topics should be guided by programme relevance and be problem-oriented, including assessments of obstacles that must be overcome if progress is to be achieved.

18. Problem-oriented research may certainly include, but should not be limited to, operations research, which in UNICEF is more relevant as part of country programming, including evaluation efforts. Operations research normally starts with current operations and addresses questions of what is working and what is not, and, in the best of such studies, why. Problem-oriented research of the sort under way at ICDC leaves more room for questioning the way the "problem" has been conventionally defined and for reassessing previously agreed policies. This approach has been especially successful in the context of examining economic and social policies concerning children and families in Central and Eastern Europe,CIS and the Baltic States and on a number of issues relating to children's rights, including the expanding interpretation of the principle of "the best interests of the child" and the resource implications of implementing social and economic rights for children.

19. Regarding the importance of the function of being able to step back from existing policies and day-to-day operations, the representative of the Government of Sweden at the 1995 Advisory Committee meeting had the following comment: "Any viable and sustainable institution dealing with such a complex issue as development must promote a corporate culture of critical thinking, of having an intellectually open climate, of being able to critically look at its own programmes, dogmas and corporate gospels. It is as important in the international development arena as it is for UNICEF internally to constantly question theories and practices, and here ICDC has a key role striking the right balance between intellectual freedom and organizational relevance."

20. Included in the planning for the forthcoming phase of the Centre's activities is the importance of more closely linking knowledge-based work under way in Florence with efforts elsewhere in UNICEF, including in the regional offices, to strengthen UNICEF capacity for work in newer areas of programme involvement. A good example of this approach is the programme of policy studies on child labour and basic education, financed by the Government of Sweden and involving the close collaboration of the Centre, the Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office and several UNICEF country offices in that region. It is anticipated that similar arrangements, combining applied research, lesson-learning from practical experience, training and documentation, can be worked out with several other regional and country offices in Africa and Asia.

21. As UNICEF strives to become what has been described as more of a "learning organization", it is important to recognize that the "learning" needed is not generally available either in universities or conventional training centres, nor capable of being acquired simply through normal day-to-day programme work. Bold new approaches to capacity-building and staff development are needed. The

extraordinary network of UNICEF field and regional offices, unparalleled in the development cooperation world, offers far more potential than has been realized for programme-relevant and action-oriented staff development and lesson-learning. It is foreseen that the Centre, working closely with regional offices and other parts of UNICEF, can play an increasingly important role in terms of capacity-building that bridges the UNICEF "hands on" learning capability in the field, on the one hand, and the international knowledge and information resources bases that represent the best the world has to offer by way of strategies, ideas and resources required for the evolving role of UNICEF, on the other. Moreover, building on eight years of experience with child-related issues in industrialized countries, the Centre is in a good position to undertake new capacity-building initiatives that have both a "North" and "South" dimension.

22. In order to respond more fully to the challenges implied by these reflections concerning the Centre's comparative advantages within UNICEF, it is proposed to shift priorities during the coming triennium towards:
(a) capacity-building and training for UNICEF staff and its major partners, especially in the two major areas of the Centre's programmes; and
(b) information, documentation and communications, including more targeted and programme-oriented publications and training materials, in support of both the Centre's research and its capacity-building efforts.

## B. Projected trends and activities in the major programme areas

### Rights of the child

23. The Centre's children's rights programme foresees four major areas of future activity: child labour; children and armed conflict; children and families of minorities and immigrants; and implementation and monitoring processes relating to the Convention.

24. Child labour has been one of the programme's major concerns in the past triennium, and it is an area of increasing general concern for UNICEF. ICDC has helped design and carry out country studies on child labour in Latin America, funded by the Swedish International Development Authority, and has produced basic materials on the subject, some of which are particularly suited for use in staff training programmes. There would appear, therefore, to be ample justification for the Centre's continued involvement in this highly complex and controversial, but poorly documented, area. The Centre proposes to continue work on: (a) the development of methodologies, including rapid appraisal techniques and improved household surveys, that are as simple and powerful as possible, including in terms of facilitating comparative analysis across and within countries; (b) the link between essential improvements in primary education and combating child labour; and © the gender dimensions of child labour, including girls as "invisible" labourers in demanding home-based activities.

25. As modern warfare unsparingly takes a greater toll on civilian populations, UNICEF, including ICDC, is focusing increased attention on the effects of armed conflicts on children. The UNICEF "Anti-War Agenda" and the Graça Machel Study on the "Impact of Armed Conflict on Children" bear testimony to the increased international commitment in this area. Following work undertaken in 1995 on the psycho-social rehabilitation of children in Eritrea and Ethiopia, the Centre proposes to undertake a new study in Rwanda to explore ways to take more preventive action prior to and during armed conflict, and focusing increased attention on the protection of children's rights. ICDC is also investigating how best to incorporate the outcome of these initiatives into

specific training courses to be organized jointly with the Office of Emergency Programmes, and the UNICEF Training and Staff Development Section in New York, and relevant regional and country offices. Training would include ways of discerning early warning signals so as to plan for the safety of civilian populations and special protection measures for children and women. Training products would range from manuals and CD-ROMs to diskettes and specific sites on the Internet.

26. The struggles of cultural minorities for recognition and increased autonomy, or for greater equality and participation in the life of their national communities, are one of the major challenges that face modern societies. The Centre has initiated a project on the children and youth of ethnic minorities, immigrants and indigenous peoples. Several articles of the Convention, especially Articles 2 and 30, protect the right of minority children to enjoy their own culture, without discrimination, and to use their own language. Among the issues being investigated are: (a) growing up Black and Latino in the United States; (b) being young and Arab in France; • multicultural education in Great Britain; (d) indigenous education in Guatemala, Peru and Bolivia; (e) native Canadians in the multicultural environment; and (f) the integration of migrants and the issue of multiculturism in Western Europe. Other themes include the impact of rapid change and "development" on indigenous peoples and urbanization as it affects the children and families of minority groups, including the formation of "ethnic ghettos" and patterns of juvenile justice. A principal objective of this project will be to identify ways to include intercultural and multicultural values in educational systems so that children can learn to respect the diversity of cultures within their own countries as well as internationally. Of particular importance will be strengthening approaches that can enable children to learn how to resist and combat racism, xenophobia, sexism and other forms of discrimination.

27. It is proposed to establish ICDC as a major international knowledge base and training centre working for the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; this mandate should pertain to child rights issues in industrialized as well as developing countries. Working closely with other concerned offices in UNICEF, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and existing networks, the Centre would take a lead role in the establishment of mechanisms to: (a) ensure policy-relevant analysis of the applications of key articles of the Convention, including comparative analysis of information provided in State Party reports, alternative reports and major independent studies; (b) facilitate the analysis and dissemination of key information concerning law, policy and practice relating to the Convention; and • promote the development and dissemination of reasonably standard definitions, child rights indicators and verifiable goals against which progress in fulfilling the provisions of the Convention can be monitored.

Economic and social policies for children

28. The economic policy programme has succeeded in building its monitoring work on Central and Eastern Europe,CIS and the Baltic States into a major information network, with impressive data-handling capabilities. The programme plans to increase the project's geographic coverage in the next triennium to include all of the 27 countries in Central and Eastern Europe,CIS and the Baltic States and the former Soviet Union. Some consideration will also be given to how best to utilize this experience in other regions. Expanding the network is likely to strengthen the project's overall impact in the region, but a number of precautions must be taken to ensure that quantity will not overtake quality considerations. A gradual approach is envisaged both because of the lead time required for identifying and training new partners and because of the need to

give countries time to resolve some of their human resources, administrative and statistical problems.

29. An important consideration is how to improve the use of this ICDC initiative by the new UNICEF field offices in this region. As a first step, the database must be installed in each office and personnel trained in its use. Another step is to ensure that the monitoring reports highlight issues where UNICEF has a clear mandate. Education, the special focus of the fifth Regional Monitoring Report (expected to be published in mid-1997), is an especially appropriate theme. The fifth report will assess how changes in the demand and supply of education, in attitudes towards education and in the quality of education are affecting child development and health, household welfare and earning capacity, labour market issues and fertility patterns.

30. A second area of research undertaken by the programme concerns child poverty in industrialized countries. Following its major international study, the results of which will appear in a book entitled Child Poverty and Deprivation in the Industrialized Countries, 1945-1995: Golden Age, Stagnation Transition, the programme proposes to narrow its focus, concentrating on aspects of cash transfer policies affecting children. One neglected but potentially important and cost-effective method of reaching the children of the poor is to improve targeting of transfers within the household. An implicit assumption underlying most cash transfer policies is that all income is pooled within the household, which means that family allowances can be paid with equal effect to fathers or mothers. However, there is increasing evidence that children are more likely to benefit from cash transfers if they are paid directly to the mother. If validated, this approach would have important implications for the way that welfare benefits to families with children should be targeted. A related concern would be the development of tax-benefit models, which are important tools for permitting analysis of the potential distributional impact of different policy reforms.

31. In addition, this programme will assume responsibility for further work on the economic dimensions of decentralization as it affects children and low-income families. In many countries where a decentralized system of social finance has been introduced, local Governments in poorer regions may be unable to fulfil their responsibilities for the provision of social assistance and family services. They lack sufficient revenue-generating powers, and the system of central-to-local transfers is inadequate. Some work has been done on this problem in Russia by the World Bank, but much remains to be learned, especially regarding policies affecting children. A collaborative effort between the Bank and ICDC may be possible. An interesting example of the issues of "fiscal federalism" and intergovernmental fiscal relations is found in the Central Asian States of the former Soviet Union. Uzbekistan has introduced an important targeted social assistance programme that is entirely administered by local committees. This scheme is sometimes cited as an example of how to target social assistance in a transition economy at a medium level of development. The system of allocation of funds to these committees, however, is far from clear, and there may be potential for local administrators to ignore central guidelines in ways that could be detrimental to children's welfare. Work on this scheme as an important case study could be integrated into the next phase of activities.

Other programmes

32. The Centre continues to cooperate with its host institution in Florence, the Istituto degli Innocenti, including on the joint project on "Historical Perspectives on Childhood". To date, three monographs have been produced: Historical Perspectives on Breastfeeding; The Decline of Infant Mortality in

Europe, 1800-1950: Four National Case Studies; and Child Labour in Historical Perspective, 1800-1985: Case Studies from Europe, Japan and Colombia. Other subjects, such as basic education and maternal/child health interventions, may be feasible to include in this series. ICDC will provide assistance to the Istituto as it strengthens its capacity and develops the mechanisms needed to assume its new responsibilities as the Government-appointed coordinator of a national "observatory" for children. In particular, the Centre plans to share with the Istituto its experience with monitoring the conditions of children in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States. Finally, the issues of children and families of immigrants are emerging as promising opportunities for joint work by ICDC and the Istituto.

### C. Information, documentation and publications

33. The Centre's active publications programme will be tailored more closely to evolving programme priorities, including increased emphasis on capacity-building and training, as well as more "popular" versions of research results. The Centre will continue to sell its publications, principally through its catalogue, while strengthening its distribution and dissemination procedures. A more proactive approach to the dissemination will be taken by devising a tailor-made marketing operation for each publication issued. National Committees for UNICEF and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will continue to be major allies in the Centre's dissemination efforts. Policy seminars aimed at the more analytically oriented press will remain one of the mainstays of the Centre's work with the media.

34. Verifiable information and accurate data are essential for monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A training seminar on children's rights information-gathering and analysis was held in mid-1996 in San Jose, Costa Rica, bringing together UNICEF children's rights focal points in the region, NGOs and, in some instances, national statistical offices. Organized by the Inter-American Human Rights Institute and the UNICEF Guatemala area office, the seminar began a process of training participants in the use of an ICDC-prepared training manual for data collection in children's rights. The basic premise of the manual is that many indicators for children's rights can be developed from already existing data. The manual will be published in Spanish and may also be produced in English and adapted to the needs of other regions. During the next three years, work will also continue on the Centre's Children's Rights Full-text Database. As of 1997, the Centre intends to offer the database as a tool to other parts of UNICEF and other organizations which have published significant works in children's rights.

35. The Centre will continue to serve on the management group of CRIN and will participate in several of the Network's projects. It plans, for instance, to contribute to the CRIN Internet project, which is investigating how much information exists on the Internet relating to children's rights, how this information can be improved qualitatively and in terms of access, and what management tools are needed for children's rights organizations seeking to link to the Internet. Initially, ICDC, together with the International Save the Children Alliance, will explore modalities for setting up a child labour conference on the Internet.

36. The Centre proposes to produce, both in hard copy and electronically, a series of Children's Rights Information Digests on relevant topics. The Digests, which can be likened to "executive briefs", will contain: (a) an incisive account of the issue; (b) a mapping of the major actors involved; • a basic reference bibliography; and (d) a listing of other information sources, including electronic databases and sources on the Internet. Three Digests are planned per year, with updates every two years.

37. For researchers and practitioners concerned with children's rights, especially in the "South", access to existing literature and to emerging new information remains very difficult. To address this problem, the Centre proposes to create and help maintain databases on key topics such as child labour, children and armed conflict, and Convention monitoring issues. Each database would be supported by a small network of "children's rights correspondents", mainly experts whose work already involves collecting information on the topic. They would be responsible for feeding information into three specially designed databases on: (a) bibliography, including academic and other literature dealing with the topic; (b) case law, or national court cases relating to international instruments; and c key national legislation or policy measures.

38. Information is dispersed and difficult to obtain, although much in demand, on the various projects on children's rights monitoring and indicators that are in operation or development world-wide. The Centre plans to produce as basic documentation an Innocenti Children's Rights Essential Readings on monitoring, including children's rights indicators. In addition, the Centre will pursue its work to identify best practices with respect to monitoring, following the Innocenti Study on an exemplary NGO process resulting in the "alternative" report prepared in the United Kingdom.

39. The ICDC library will continue to strengthen its role as both a support and reference service through the development of its collection, inter-library loans, specialized databases and on-line search facilities.

## D. Training and capacity-building

40. At its June 1996 meeting, the Advisory Committee recommended a shift of emphasis in all programmes towards providing more attention to capacity-building and training for UNICEF staff and its major partners. Capacity-building should take place at all levels from international to subnational, and especially in new areas of UNICEF commitment (either geographically, e.g. children and women in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States, or thematically, such as training relating to the UNICEF Anti-War Agenda and other children's rights issues, including child labour).

41. ICDC training strategies should be developed in ways that take maximum advantage of the closeness of UNICEF to the field, its country programming approach, decentralized staffing and management. The Centre is strategically placed to be able to derive lessons from the actual programme experience of UNICEF or others. It can draw on the immense body of established professional expertise, knowledge and practical experience lodged in other organizations, including universities and research centres, in the literature, and in individual specialists, North and South. One of its main challenges, however, is to provide that contribution in a way that best feeds into the more field-based, "hands-on" training, including in-service training, so required in UNICEF, and to make it responsive to locally determined needs for training and improved capacities.

42. The Centre can continue to contribute to capacity-building through the development of training materials, literature reviews, assessments of "lessons learned" from policy and actual practice, the training of trainers, and the organization of cross-cultural or interregional seminars.

## E. Staffing and financing

43. As noted in paragraph 13 above, the Centre continues to rely on a relatively small regular staff (expected to total 15 by the beginning of 1997). This regular staff is complemented by the flexible use of consultants on special service agreements (SSAs), research associates, interns and junior professional officers, as well as cooperative arrangements, including secondments, with other parts of UNICEF and other institutions. It is anticipated that increasing use will be made of short assignments in Florence ("mini-sabbaticals") for experienced UNICEF staff who require time away from pressing managerial responsibilities to analyse the results of their work in recent years and to prepare various types of written materials to be used both as part of the new UNICEF strategic planning and evaluation process and for capacity-building and staff training purposes. As in prior years, it is the intention of the Centre to maintain an upper limit of about 30 persons in residence, including all those on SSAs and other remunerated assignments of various sorts. The actual number during the forthcoming triennium is expected to be approximately 25 at any point in time.

44. Increasing efforts are being made, moreover, to share the costs of "non-staff" assignments with other parts of UNICEF and other institutions. Currently, for example, a Senior Fellow in child rights is virtually fully financed by the European University Institute in Florence. A consultant on child labour is being shared among several UNICEF offices. A senior staff member from the World Bank will spend a sabbatical year at ICDC, financed by the Bank, working on issues of day care and early child development in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States.

45. The commitment of the Government of Italy for the 1997-1999 triennium has been maintained at 10.5 billion lire, the same amount approved for the prior three-year phases. The lira has strengthened against the dollar since the beginning of the 1994-1996 triennium, so the dollar value of this core contribution is $6.7 million, compared with $6.3 million in January 1994. As noted earlier, furthermore, initial progress has been made in securing other sources of support for the Centre, and increased efforts in that regard are foreseen during the forthcoming phase.

46. A particularly promising arrangement for fund-raising from sources other than the core Italian contribution is suggested by the agreements reached in recent years with the Governments of Italy and Sweden, as well as the World Bank, providing support for ICDC-based activities that are a part of a larger donor concern for a specific region (sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States, respectively, in those three cases). In each instance, the donor has made a substantial commitment to programme activities in a given region, directly or through UNICEF, and requested ICDC to assume responsibility for various types of analytical, training and documentary work, taking advantage of the Centre's established experience in applied research, documentation, capacity-building and publications. It is anticipated that other arrangements of this sort can be developed, especially to allow the Centre to expand its activities in other regions, including in Asia, for work in priority areas such as child labour, children and armed conflict, and monitoring compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

47. A target expenditure rate of $3.5 million per year has been set for the Centre for 1997-1999, a level which corresponds roughly, in inflation-adjusted terms, to the expenditure rate of ICDC during the 1988-1993 period. Increased funding from non-Italian sources will be necessary to meet that target. It is

expected that the dollar value of the Italian core contribution will be no less than $2.2 million per year, allowing for some exchange rate fluctuation. Accordingly, a balance of approximately $1.3 million per year remains to be found from other supplementary funding and access by the Centre to general resources, in accordance with the 1994 Executive Board decision providing "that general resources be used by the Centre only for specific Board-approved actions and where other UNICEF offices request the Centre to undertake certain aspects of these actions on their behalf" (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1, decision 1994/R.2/10).

## F. Recommendation

48. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board adopt the following draft recommendation:

The Executive Board

Having reviewed the report on the "International Child Development Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 1997-1999" (E/ICEF/1996/20),

Authorizes a three-year extension for the Centre for the period 1997-1999, with a total allocation of $10.5 million in supplementary funding, of which 10.5 billion lire (approximately $6.7 million) has been pledged by the Government of Italy, for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from other donors for specific activities.

Annex

ESTIMATED BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURES, 1997-1999 a/
(In thousands of United States dollars)

| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Programme costs | | | | |
| Research, policy analysis, programme coordination, capacity building and training, workshops, publications and dissemination in two core programmes: child rights; and economic and social policies for children | 2 130 | 2 380 | 2 600 | 7 110 |
| Information, documentation and communications (in addition to these activities in core programmes) | 430 | 450 | 480 | 1 360 |
| Exploratory activities in new areas | 50 | 60 | 80 | 190 |
| Subtotal | 2 610 | 2 890 | 3 160 | 8 660 |
| Programme support costs | | | | |
| General management (salaries and other personnel costs for Director's Office and Administration and Finance Office) | 490 | 510 | 530 | 1 530 |
| General operating costs (communications, travel, supplies, maintenance, equipment, Advisory Committee meetings) | 100 | 100 | 110 | 310 |
| Subtotal | 590 | 610 | 640 | 1 840 |
| Total | 3 200 | 3 500 | 3 800 | 10 500 b/ |

a/ The three-year contribution from the Government of Italy is 10.5 billion lire, the equivalent of $6.7 million at the June 1996 exchange rate, with the remainder to be sought from other sources.

b/ Less the 3 per cent charge for recovery of UNICEF incremental operating costs for supplementary-funded projects.

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